

## INTERVIEW II

DATE: August 19, 1985

INTERVIEWEE: WILLIAM J. CROCKETT

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. Crockett's residence, Los Altos, California

Tape 1 of 1, Side 1

G: Okay, let's start with the trip to Senegal. Was that the first one that you went on?

C: Right, the first.

G: Okay. Do you recall how the Vice President was chosen to go on that trip, any insight there?

C: I think that was very early in the Kennedy Administration, I forget exactly what month.

G: April.

C: April.

G: Early April.

C: So it was one of the first trips of anybody who was going abroad to represent the President, and I think the administration felt the need of having a connection, of making a connection out there, and the highest official that the President could send was Johnson, the Vice President. So I think the consideration was exactly that, somebody to represent the President at the highest level short of the President himself going. There was a--at least my observation was that there was a warm feeling, a sense of trust that existed between Johnson and Kennedy, and Kennedy and Johnson. That wasn't always the case between

Crockett -- II -- 2

Johnson and others of the administration, but with the President and Mr. Johnson I think there was a strong sense of trust. So I think Kennedy trusted him to go and wanted him to test the waters and bring back a recommendation on what this new administration should be doing out there. I think the President trusted Johnson's political judgments and his ability to judge what was happening out there versus the American political scene. I think for all those reasons, perhaps more, Mr. Johnson was chosen for the trip. I think, also, Mr. Johnson himself always liked to go on those trips. This was the first really--we're talking about to Senegal?

G: Senegal.

C: Yes. I think Mr. Johnson liked to go on the trips, because those trips abroad I think gave him a sense of purpose that perhaps wasn't achieved just in the routine jobs of being vice president, of presiding over the Senate and doing those kinds of things. So I think a real sense of purpose was achieved for Mr. Johnson by going on those trips.

Trips abroad sometimes are mere ceremony and that one was more ceremony than substance, because it was at a something anniversary of the Republic of Senegal, I don't know, fifth or tenth, I don't know which one it was, it doesn't matter. But therefore it was more ceremony than substance, and Mr. Johnson always resisted going anyplace just for ceremony. He really wanted to--he pressed hard: "Is there something of substance that I can do, something of real importance

Crockett -- II -- 3

that we can discuss, some changes that might be made in policy that comes about because of the discussions?"

But I think he was chosen because the President wanted to make perhaps a statement to everyone about his trust in Johnson, and trusted Johnson.

G: Was there any significance to Bill Moyers going along? Moyers was now on Sargent Shriver's Peace Corps staff.

C: Yes, I think two things about Mr. Moyers going. One was he was a long-time Johnson person and in those days was almost implicitly trusted by Mr. Johnson as being an astute person with the press and astute in terms of all the problems of the trips. So I think that was one reason. Another one though, I think this was the opportunity to see the Peace Corps; there was a big Peace Corps mission there, I believe, and it was an opportunity to see what was happening.

G: Anything on his association with LBJ that you observed during this trip?

C: Well, close would be the word and trusting would be another word. I know that if I needed a decision from Mr. Johnson about the logistics of what we were going to do, or what he wanted to do, and I couldn't get to him, Bill Moyers had access and he seemed to be able to get the answers. And occasionally Bill Moyers gave the answer himself, as if he had real assurance, or real self-assurance, that he could speak for the President occasionally. I think the association, the relationship, was very close indeed.

Crockett -- II -- 4

- G: Yes. Was there, do you think, a civil rights dimension to this trip? They were going to a Third World country and a new administration in trying to establish [inaudible].
- C: I don't know. I never thought of it until you mentioned it. And thinking about it, I don't believe so. Maybe it could be read into it, but I don't think it was a--never in my consciousness was it a conscious decision or discussion. Now certainly Johnson's behavior there was very open and direct and he mingled freely among the people, so that his behavior made some statements, I think. But I don't think there was any conscious effort to do that from a civil rights point of view.
- G: The [Pre-Presidential] Diary notes at one point that he got out of the car and shook hands along the road.
- C: He went into a market, as I remember, and I think part of that--he liked to do it, certainly. He liked people and he liked people to like him. So I think that was part of it. I think another part was the reaction to what the Ambassador had told him about "Don't get out among these people. They're dirty and diseased. Don't touch them and don't shake hands with them." So I think that was a part of the statement, too, that that wasn't the way to represent America. In briefings to other ambassadors after he became president, he often said this also, that he expected his ambassadors to get out among the people and to be seen and talked to by people. So I think it was a deep conviction on his part that the people are important and that

Crockett -- II -- 5

officialdom needs to make itself a part of the people or at least close to the people.

One time in one of the trips he talked about one of his reasons for walking so much was that, quote, "The prime minister has to walk with me and this may be the first time the prime minister ever walked among his own people." Another time he talked about the ceremonies, the sterileness of ceremonies in terms of saving a nation or being meaningful to a nation, that it's the people more than the honor guard and the screeching sirens, it's the people that are important. So I think there was a deep, I don't know whether you'd call [it] populist feeling, but a deep conviction that the people of these countries were important in terms of their view of America and their relationship to America.

G: With regard to this incident of stopping and going into the market, was this something that was on the schedule or did he--?

C: No, I don't think it was absolutely impromptu, but it wasn't on the schedule, as I remember it. It was something that he just did, he and Mrs. Johnson, and she went with him, of course. That they wanted to see the market. I think he felt that he was there to represent the President to the people and that the schedule again was sterile, all official this and official that, but no chance of his seeing the people or being seen by them in an intimate way. So I think always those of us who made the schedules tended to keep it formal and safe, and he was very capable of wrestling out of that schedule and breaking the bonds and getting out. Looking back, I admire him for it. At the

Crockett -- II -- 6

time, you know, I was not angry but frustrated about how it frustrated our efforts, how it bollixed up the schedule, how we lost time and things didn't work right. But looking back, I think he was absolutely right. And seeing the things that are happening in the world politically, it seemed to me that he was really on track.

G: Any recollections of his interactions with the other members of the delegation, [John] Rooney and Kuchel and--?

C: Yes. Certainly he and Mr. Rooney were very good friends; they had been long-time friends. An unlikely friendship, this lawyer from Brooklyn and this Texan, but a very firm friendship and a very--not a social friendship but a political friendship. In Rooney's eyes, Mr. Johnson just couldn't do any wrong. Now, I think the rest of it, he didn't pay much attention to them. The rest of [them] and Rooney, too, they were more inclined to go along the easy way, and the easy way was the official way, going to the reception, going to the stadium to watch the review of the troops and all the things that were happening. I don't think any of them accompanied him when he went out among the people and stopped at this place. If they did, I'm sure most of them stayed in the cars or perhaps got out and bought a trinket or two. But I think he mostly didn't pay much attention to them. Courteous but not much attention.

G: Okay. Thomas Kuchel was along, too.

C: Yes, I remember, yes.

G: Anything on LBJ and Kuchel?

C: Not that I remember specifically. Maybe it will come, but--

Crockett -- II -- 7

G: Okay. The trip began in Puerto Rico, did it not?

C: Well, that was our first stop. We left from Washington. Puerto Rico was the first stop.

G: Why did you go to Puerto Rico? Was there any significance to that?

C: I cannot recall. There was, I'm sure, a reason and I don't remember.

G: Now at San Juan he toured the University of San Juan and a drug factory there. Do either of those events bring back anything?

C: No, they don't. I don't know, I can't remember. It's my thought that that may have been fairly impromptu, but I am not sure. That would have been seen, you know, as more of a domestic part of the trip and I just think I was [not] part of that planning.

G: I have a note that he was in a very good mood on the trip, is that--?

C: I think that's right. He was in a good mood. I think it, from his point of view, went off well and he was well received. It was early in the administration and I think he was in a very good mood. There was no. . . .

G: While he was there, he went to a fishing village in Kayar, I guess, thirty miles away.

C: That's right. I think that was more of a Peace Corps kind of a trip to show the people and the need for technical help that they had. So it was just sort of an orientation trip for him to see circumstances of people. Nothing very significant about it except just to--well, I think always there was an undercurrent on those trips of awareness of what the press might be saying about the trip and about him back home. So there was always a lot of pressure to create the impression, and

Crockett -- II -- 8

that sounds superficial and that isn't really what I mean, but certainly give evidence to the press that it's a working trip and not just a junket, that there's substance, that's he's working, he's seeing things, he's gathering information that has significance for back home. [There was] I think a deliberate awareness that some of those kind of things with the press going along could only be seen as work and not play.

G: Did he interact much with the press?

C: Not very much directly. He would depend upon Moyers or [Horace] Busby, and later on Carl Rowan, to brief the press. Then occasionally they would prevail upon him to meet the press directly, but not very often. He didn't make very many statements. I think he felt wary that the press would bore in too deeply on substance or what was happening beyond what he could talk about or beyond what the realities were, and therefore he would be boxed, whereas Moyers or Busby or Rowan could take care of it better.

G: Sure. He went from Senegal to Geneva. Anything on that leg of the trip?

C: No, not really. That was again, as I remember it, very impromptu. That had not been planned in, I think.

G: Oh, really?

C: I don't believe it had in our original planning, but I think they decided that on the way home perhaps this was something that could be done. As I remember it, we were only in Geneva maybe overnight, or



Crockett -- II -- 9

maybe he didn't even stay all night. Maybe we went from there to Paris, I think.

G: Yes.

C: And maybe we picked up the ambassador that was in Geneva and took him to Paris with us, I think. On that leg of the trip I think he briefed Mr. Johnson on what was going on and what he was doing and what was happening in Geneva.

G: Anything on the Paris end of the trip?

C: No, not that I remember at all.

And coming home from Paris was a very light and happy note. It was somebody's birthday, I think maybe Rooney's birthday, or it was close to Rooney's birthday or wedding anniversary or something, and so there was a lot of hilarity and a lot of friendly words. It was on that trip that I think Mr. Rooney had a little too much to drink by the time he got home.

G: Was this the first time you became aware of LBJ's sense of humor, or was he telling stories or jokes?

C: No. Yes, he was a great story and joke teller and was fascinating when he was telling--they weren't really jokes as much as they were incidents of his life and experience that were funny and meaningful, but also funny. And he was really good at that. In a sense [he] poked fun at himself, poked fun at his--brought his early life into it and his own experiences into it. But he was very attractive to people I think when he was in that mood.

G: Let's go to the Asian trip.

Crockett -- II -- 10

C: That was the next one, I guess. I don't know when that one happened.

G: This was in May, so it was a month later.

C: May of--?

G: 1961.

C: Yes. That was a nightmare trip, as far as I was concerned. It was really, really a rough trip.

G: How so?

C: I was inexperienced in terms of setting up those kinds of things. Embassies were inexperienced in terms of their side of the deal, and the logistics in most of them in most cases were poorly done, so we had lots of local problems logistically. And I think he was not happy with a lot of things going on. I think he was not happy that the [Stephen] Smiths were along.

G: Oh, really?

C: I think so. I think he felt that they were along as the President's spies. Something happened, I think--I don't know. This is all speculation, I shouldn't even speculate, but certainly there didn't seem to be the easy feelings as there was on that first trip.

G: Well, is it correct that he didn't want to go to begin with?

C: I think so, yes, that there wasn't any substance out there for him to do. I don't know, I can't recall the urgency of his going. I think again he thought it was just a trip. When we would be talking about agendas, he talked much about "I don't want to go on a trip. I don't want to go just for the show of it. If there isn't substance, I don't want to do it." And when he'd look at an agenda, you know, you'd be

Crockett -- II -- 11

seeing this or doing that, even putting a wreath on the tomb of an unknown soldier, he would question, "What is the need? What is the substance? What do we get out of it? What does the United States get out of it? What do I get out of it?" So that he was always pressing that there would be a reason for the trip, and I think it was hard to find a reason for that trip. And I don't really know who pressed that trip, whether it was his own aides that pressed it or whether it was-- I don't think it was the State Department that pressed it. Maybe there's data someplace that shows how it got cranked up, but I don't think I'm aware.

G: Did the fact that he didn't want to go, do you think, affect his mood while he was on the trip?

C: Probably, probably. I think so.

G: You've mentioned his concern about the Smiths. Perhaps their presence--?

C: Yes, and you know we were talking before we started the tape about how sometimes he became defensively aggressive when he was in the presence of obvious culture or people that were cultured and put it forward. And it seemed to me he took pleasure in behaving in sort of real uncouth ways in front of them, just deliberately.

G: Can you recall any particular--?

C: Well, the one I recall is--I don't know exactly where it was, maybe it was Manila. They were all hot countries. But, anyway, [it was] hot and dirty, and all of us had ridden in our air-conditioned cars to the airport and he had walked much of the distance. When he came in he

Crockett -- II -- 12

was in a good humor. But he started taking off his clothes, and he took off his shirt and he scratched and he was sweaty, and he took off his pants, you know, there in front of--well, he had on shorts and that was okay, but that kind of behavior I'm sure in front of the Smiths looked like uncouth behavior. And yet he did it very deliberately and then sort of paraded and talked.

G: (Laughter)

C: And you could see, at least I thought I could see them being uncomfortable and being sort of affronted by this kind of behavior. And I always thought, "LBJ, you really don't need to [do that]. You're not doing yourself any good doing that." But he did it anyway. Mrs. Johnson was always gracious, but she didn't try to boss him, certainly. But he didn't go out of his way to cater to them at all. I don't know what others have seen or said, and I don't care really, but that was my observation.

G: Did he have any disagreements with them?

C: No, I think no obvious disagreements, but sort of a not paying much attention to them.

G: Really?

C: Not really. They were certainly always included in the official functions, but I'm not sure and I believe that he was not included in most of the official talks. I'm sure he did not go along. When the Vice President saw the heads of state and talked, Smith was not there. And he might not have been there because he didn't have any status officially.

Crockett -- II -- 13

- G: I wonder why the Smiths did go along. Did you ever get any reading on that?
- C: No real whys from the White House. And so everybody, when they would mention the Smiths, would raise their eyebrows, you know, as if the Smiths were there for some ulterior purpose of the President's.
- G: I notice in reading the notes between LBJ and Jean Smith after the trip, they seemed very cordial, leaving the impression that they had been quite amicable.
- C: Yes, I don't think there was any incident that wasn't amiable or wasn't friendly, but it was just this behavior of his that was interesting.
- G: Okay. The first stop after California--
- C: They stopped in Hawaii, I guess.
- G: Yes. Anything on [that]? Let's see, he stopped and broke ground at the East-West Trade Center or Cultural Institute.
- C: Yes.
- G: Do you remember that?
- C: No, I don't, and oftentimes I didn't go with the party. I stayed behind and tried to make--I think he also visited the cemetery there I believe. But there was nothing of much significance there.
- G: He had played a role, I think, in getting the legislation passed.
- C: Yes, he and John Rooney--he in the Senate and John Rooney in the House--had collaborated in getting the East-West Cultural Center started. So he took this occasion to be associated with it. I hope--were all his statements saved, his press statements and his speeches?

Crockett -- II -- 14

G: Yes.

C: So that that's a part of it.

G: Yes. Also in Hawaii he attended a large party at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel given by Jack Burns.

C: The Governor, yes.

G: Yes.

C: Jack Burns was a good friend of Johnson's, being a good Democrat. And I don't remember anything of significance that happened there.

I think the first stop then was Saigon I believe. And, again, he hated motorcycles and he hated escorts, and he wanted maximum press coverage and he wanted maximum photographic coverage, and he was always unhappy when arrangements were made that separated him from the press and separated him from the photographers. And those arrangements were very bad there.

G: Was the Saigon, the South Vietnamese police, or the military police at all responsible for the problem?

C: Yes, they were responsible, but the thing that we learned from that trip was that we had to be more active, we had to be more in charge of the arrangements at each embassy. We just couldn't leave them up to, quote, "the local embassy" and the local government to do. That the local embassy generally didn't throw its weight around if they didn't like what was going on, whereas someone from Washington could be more insistent. So after that trip, we always "helped the embassy out," quote, unquote, with more logistical help and more people from Washington and really arranged it ourselves rather than letting the

Crockett -- II -- 15

local government arrange it. But he was very unhappy with the arrangements and unhappy with the accommodations.

G: Anything in particular?

C: Well--

G: He stayed in the Gia Long Palace.

C: Palace, and he hated that, you know.

G: Why did he hate it?

C: Well, because it tended to separate him from the staff. They didn't let very many other people stay there, so he was isolated. The accommodations generally were sort of formal and stiff, and the beds were hard and the showers were low and no air-conditioning. He liked physical comfort and I think deserved it after the amount of work that he did on each trip. So one of the things he always insisted that we try to arrange was that he not stay at the official guesthouse, that he not stay as a guest of the prime minister or the president. We generally got this accomplished after that trip. And we would renovate the showers, we would make sure that the beds were long enough and try to provide the physical comfort that we thought he deserved and that he liked.

G: Was he insistent on having the high pressure showers at this point or did this come later?

C: Well, this came later, after he was in all those low showers that hit him on the chest, you know. Through the complaints more than his insistence, it began to dawn upon me what he liked and what would please him, so I made a list of the little things that we would do in

Crockett -- II -- 16

advance to [accommodate him]. Because my view was as he was accommodated by these kinds of things, he felt better, his humor improved, he would perform better, and there was no point in aggravating him all the time on those little things that inconvenienced him. And they were not petty; individually they might sound petty, but they really weren't petty if you're on a long trip. I find myself preferring to stay in a motel rather than to stay at somebody's house, relatives or friends, because of maybe the same feeling.

G: He did stay in the Palace two nights in succession, I guess, though.

C: Yes, after you get there you're locked in and you really can't get out. I don't remember how long we were there, maybe that's all that--because once you're there, you know, you can't get out gracefully or graciously.

G: How did he get along with [Ngo Dinh] Diem? Do you recall his meetings with him?

C: That was one trip where I went with him on those meetings. My view, my belief, my impression, is that he was always--he liked strong men and he liked sort of macho men, I think. He liked men that were trying to do something for their country, and I think he saw all that in Diem. I think one of the problems even then was Madame [Ngo Dinh] Nhu, I believe, the sister-in-law. All the time they were trying to find ways to convince Diem that he should disassociate and control her, because in a sense she was the one that was causing the country to really go down the drain. But I don't know whether Johnson talked to him about her or not.



Crockett -- II -- 17

But the relationship I think was warm if not cordial. I think in those days Diem did not think American troops were what was needed and Johnson agreed with that, of course, in those early days, that support was what they needed most of all. But I think he got along well with him. I think he saw him as a strong man trying to do things.

G: Did he urge more social or economic reform?

C: Oh, yes, and he urged--and I think Diem agreed but was saying, "We have to go slow, and it's difficult and you don't understand," very resistive I think to very much change. But Johnson certainly urged and certainly didn't make that a condition of support I don't believe, but certainly made it that that would be one of our expectations. So he did urge.

G: How would he have phrased it? Do you recall basically how emphatic he was or how he worded it?

C: Oh, that was a long time ago. I think the way he would urge--he did urge--was to try to link it with the things communism would be saying, the leverage communism would try to take over the poor conditions of people, that this was a cancerous kind of thing and that a society couldn't be held together just by restrictive means and restricting the people and oppressing, that he had to take the initiative away from the communists. And I think Diem would agree but say, "It's difficult, it's hard, the time isn't ready, you don't understand" kinds of things.

G: Do you think Johnson felt like he had made any headway with Diem?

Crockett -- II -- 18

C: I don't think very much, no. Maybe a little bit, maybe general agreement but not much headway in tangible things being done.

G: His report does not seem to have been optimistic at all.

C: No, I don't think so. I think he was very realistic and hardheaded.

G: He referred to the people around Diem as being in some cases corrupt, in others--

C: And resistive of change and frightened about what would happen to them I think in change. But he did--now, in those days he never got to talk to anybody by himself. Later on, [Dean] Rusk especially insisted that Johnson get to talk to the head of state or the prime minister personally and alone.

G: You mean, without you or--?

C: Without me or without the ambassador or without anyone, because Rusk felt that Johnson could be more persuasive, could really be more effective in a person-to-person conversation. Because those conversations in Saigon were stilted in a way, and you know, [there were] a whole bunch of people on both sides listening. So the statements had to be more carefully made on both sides, more formally stated, so that the man-to-man, person-to-person element was really screened out.

G: Do you recall how LBJ characterized Madame Nhu or her husband?

C: No, I don't remember. I don't remember.

G: Did LBJ meet with any of the dissidents or any of the opposing factions while he was there?

C: I don't believe so. Not to my recollection. Now, maybe some others might have remembered, but I don't believe so. I think there was

Crockett -- II -- 19

always a question of whether or not he should, and often debated should he, but often decided not to simply because of the concern of what message that might imply to the officialdom and what aid and help it might give the opposition. Now, he did occasionally meet with opposition, but I don't believe he did there.

G: I know that in the file on this trip there was a letter from someone who was very critical of Diem, a local Vietnamese diplomat I think. There's no indication that LBJ saw the guy in person but this letter was apparently delivered to him, or at least to his staff. Do you have any recollection of that?

C: No, I don't remember that at all.

G: How do you think this leg of the trip affected his views on Vietnam?

C: It's interesting. As I remember, and I don't know whether the records support it or not, but my memory of what he said and thought was that we should not become militarily involved. And I think he was pessimistic about the outcome.

G: Really?

C: I think so. That it's a tough road ahead for change to take place and a little bit pessimistic, I thought, about the outcome.

Tape 1 of 1, Side 2

G: [Inaudible] the Philippines.

C: Again, a strong, attractive man that Johnson liked and an attractive woman as his wife that Johnson liked. I think both the Johnsons liked them; they felt very friendly to [Ferdinand] Marcos. And my view, my belief is that in those days Johnson felt very buoyed by what was

Crockett -- II -- 20

happening in the Philippines, that this man was making a real difference, a real contribution. This was long before he declared the restrictive measures that he did later, so I think Johnson felt very optimistic about this scene.

G: He stayed in another palace.

C: That's right, and he hated that again. Again, you see, it was too late to change, but we learned from that. Oh, he still stayed at a few palaces, like he stayed with the Shah in the Shah's place when we visited Iran, but mostly we didn't stay at palaces anymore. They were not to his liking. But he did like Marcos and his wife.

G: Anything at all on their interaction?

C: I don't think I saw that. In this situation I was not with them.

G: Okay. From there to Formosa.

C: That again was a high point because he again saw a strong man that had done a great deal for the country, and so he was I think very taken with what social reforms could do for a country and what a strong, benign, in a sense, dictatorship could do, and so was very positive to Chiang and Madame Chiang [Kai-shek].

In that case I was more closely [involved]. I went to the dinner Johnson was invited to, and Mrs. Johnson was invited to their home for dinner. It was a formal affair but nice. And the Johnsons liked them, I am sure, and liked what they saw in the country. Again, there was opposition, of course, but I think they didn't see that opposition, didn't visit with it. I think that stop was a very good one. I don't remember any bad incidents. I think it went well.

Crockett -- II -- 21

G: He did stay at a hotel, too.

C: Yes, he stayed at--we were lucky there. (Laughter)

One incident that happened--I'm sure it was there. I think about this time Mr. Johnson was negotiating for a home in Washington, D.C., and I remember going to his hotel to see him late in the evening and he was still up or he had called me, I think, to come. He was waiting for a telephone call from Washington about his house. And I urged that he let me sit by the telephone and that I would waken him when the call came because it was late and he had a big day the next day. And he said, "Oh, I want to talk and I want to get the call. I trust you, but I learned that in these kind of things, it's better to do them yourself." He was very self-confident and sometimes not very delegating. He really kept his finger on things. He was pleasant about it but insistent that he would sit up, he would get the call.

G: Was this generally characteristic of him, do you think?

C: I think so, I think [he was] very much the one that needed to be consulted and needed to be involved in lots of things.

One of the things that happened in the State Department was that he would often call directly to people, like the African bureau or the European bureau chief, and want information. And if they didn't have it, they often felt very fearful. So that what happened in the State Department was all those people required lots of information then from their subordinates that normally wouldn't be required, simply to have it on hand if and when Johnson would call. And that insistence on his part that people have data and information was organizationally and

Crockett -- II -- 22

put in a management sense not very good management, because it forced people to spend a lot of time on things that they really shouldn't be spending time on. But that was his style.

G: Was this more applicable to while he was president rather than VP?

C: Yes, more applicable to his presidency.

G: Anything else on the Chinese portion of this trip?

C: I don't think so. I think it went very well, as I recall, total accord between them.

G: Seems like he was presented with a portrait of himself done by a Chinese--

C: Chinese, yes.

G: --on a silk screen or something like that.

C: I remember that now that you mention it, but that was not very significant.

G: Really?

C: No, you know, he received it. I don't know what he ever did with it, whether it's still someplace around.

G: Had he started acquiring art from his travels before this?

C: No, I don't believe so.

G: When did he first start buying paintings?

C: I can't remember sequentially when trips took place, but I think the time when we went to Beirut as the first stop, and I guess that was the Middle Eastern trip, I think that was the trip that I was told by Liz Carpenter that the [Vice] President wanted to get paintings that would be representative of the art of each country. I think that was when that

Crockett -- II -- 23

started, and after that, then we would get the artist to bring paintings in. But I don't think he had started it at that time.

G: He did have some clothes made, I gather, while he was there at Hong Kong. Do you remember that?

C: I don't remember that, no.

G: Wasn't there a Linden Johnson there, L-I-N-D-E-N, who was a--?

C: Tailor? Yes, I think so. Now it's coming back a little bit. But Hong Kong is the stop to get clothes made, as you well know. And I don't know how long we were there. It was sort of a rest period.

G: From there to Bangkok.

C: Oh, yes.

G: Anything on this--?

C: One of the things I believe--was this the trip that a guy by the name of [Kenneth] Young went with us, and he dropped off in Saigon I believe, so he wasn't with us. Or maybe he dropped off in Bangkok. I think there was a Young that was going to be an ambassador that was replacing somebody.

G: Is he the one that Johnson got so mad at?

C: Yes. He was a very controversial guy, but I forget where he left us. I guess he left us in--we were taking him out to his post, and I don't know which post it was. But Johnson got angry at him because he was insistent on some point of view, but I can't remember.

G: What was it, do you recall?

C: I can't remember. I can't remember.

G: It was a matter of policy.

Crockett -- II -- 24

C: Yes, it was a matter of policy, a matter of something Johnson should do, he thought, that affected policy. But I can't remember the incident, maybe Busby could remember or Bill Moyers. I don't know whether Bill was on that trip, though, or not. But that would be worth checking. Maybe Young himself could talk about it.

Bangkok is a blank to me. I just cannot remember anything that happened there.

G: Was this a major incident with Johnson arguing with this fellow?

C: Yes, fairly major, I think. So I think it would be worth checking.

G: Any of the specifics?

C: Well, only--no, no specifics. It was something about the policy and what he was recommending Johnson do when he got there, or say when he got there. And I don't know whether it relates to Bangkok or whether it relates to Saigon, but it was one of those two.

And Bangkok is a blur to me, so I don't have any, anything about Bangkok.

G: Spent the night at a hotel there.

C: We were learning, I guess. Then from Bangkok we went to--was that the last stop? Bermuda, we went to Bermuda, I don't know whether from Bangkok or not.

G: He did have an interview on Thai television while he was there. Do you recall that?

C: No, I don't recall that. That one disappeared out of my memory.

G: Now, from there he went to India to New Delhi.



Crockett -- II -- 25

C: Oh, that's right, that's right. I remember. And again, I think he liked the Prime Minister [Jawaharlal Nehru], and our ambassador there was the economist, whatever his name is.

G: John Kenneth Galbraith.

C: Galbraith, yes.

G: Did he get along well with Galbraith?

C: I would say fairly well, not very well. Galbraith was a very, in my view, very self-important person and needed status and needed--so I think he competed with Johnson rather than trying to help him.

G: Anything in particular?

C: Well, I remember I listened in on a conversation that they had with the Prime Minister. And I remember coaching Galbraith on the side to be quiet, to let the Vice President speak, talk, because he was interjecting and interfering and really going in a different direction, and I don't remember exactly the substance of the speech. Outwardly the relationship was all right, but it seemed to me that there was a competitive spirit in Galbraith.

But again, I don't remember any significant things about substance that happened there.

G: Were you in on the conversations between Nehru and Johnson?

C: Just one. Just this one that I was referring to. But I really don't remember the substance of the conversation, and I didn't make any notes, and so it all washed out of my memory, I'm sorry to say.

G: Someone else suggested that the two men didn't understand each other.

Crockett -- II -- 26

C: I'm not sure. I didn't see that, but that could be true. But I did not see it.

G: He did spend the night at the President's house there.

C: Yes, probably an [inaudible].

G: Did he object to that?

C: He always objected. And in those early days I was not insistent with local embassies and ambassadors that this wasn't necessary. They would come forth saying the prime minister or the president wants him to be the guest, and if it isn't done, they'll read bad things into it and the country will read bad things into it. So on that first trip I acquiesced in all that, but after I had discovered how really unhappy he was, and uncomfortable he was, I didn't acquiesce after that except in very rare circumstances like the Shah. So on this first trip around he stayed at lots of uncomfortable places.

G: Did he blame you each time, or did it simply get worse?

C: No, he never did blame me. Our relationship was very nice. He never did castigate me. But he would say, "Well, Bill, another shower to hit me in the belly, another bed that my feet stick out four inches over the end, another sleepless night." So I got the message. He was very nice to me, I must say. I had my share of faux pas and my share of things going wrong, but he was always very gracious and nice.

G: How did he prepare for these meetings with other heads of state?

C: Well, in the beginning again we didn't do very well. We had a briefing book that supposedly he read before he left, which would be impossible, because [for] every country there was a big briefing book

Crockett -- II -- 27

prepared by the State Department on all issues that we had. And then between jumps, in the jump between [stops] he would be expected to read.

But we got smarter after that. The next trip we would have an officer from the embassy, like the deputy chief of mission would come to the previous stop and then fly on the plane with us to the next country and would personally brief the [Vice] President on things that were going on, things that ought to be said, things that shouldn't be said. And that worked much, much better. But it was a matter of learning how to do it as we went along, because none of us had done it before.

G: Anything on the exchanges of gifts that you recall on this trip?

C: Well, not specifically except that became a very big thing, and as time went on Johnson generally was disappointed and unhappy with the gifts that the State Department chose. We had left it to somebody in Protocol and then it was sort of perfunctorily done. He always wanted it to be more personalized, something more meaningful. So after this trip we spent a lot of time on gift selection and learned that he wanted to give gifts to many, many people. He wasn't satisfied giving gifts just to the prime minister; he wanted to give gifts to the chauffeur and to the gateman and to--you know, he was gracious and generous. So we made sure that we had lots of things along.

G: Now, he had his own trinket box, didn't he, with his pens and lighters and books and stuff like that?

Crockett -- II -- 28

C: Yes, he did have. But beyond that he wanted things that could be engraved or things that could be inscribed so we made sure that that happened after that.

G: He spoke to a crowd at Agra.

C: And I didn't go to Agra with them, so I don't know what happened on that trip.

My job eventually became mostly making sure that the trip went well, making sure that the arrangements were made, making sure that people knew what to do when. So it became more logistic oriented than substance. So oftentimes I was not involved, even there when things were going on like the Agra trip.

G: Now, he went to Pakistan.

C: Pakistan. And he liked Ayub Khan very much. Ayub later came to visit him at the Ranch, or came to the United States and spent some time at the Ranch. I wasn't a part of those discussions so I don't really know what went on in any intimate way except I know that he liked Ayub very much, and the trip I think there went well. He was well entertained and well received, and well received by the people. The people side of the trip seemed to give him an energy. On the people side, when he sensed that he was well received by people, he got buoyed up by it, I believe.

G: Did he get a better reaction in some of these countries than others?

C: Well, I think he sensed it. I'm not sure that by the objective measurement there was better in one than another. But somehow he sensed a better reception in some than others.

Crockett -- II -- 29

G: From there he went to Greece. Anything on Athens?

C: Oh, yes. Not that I recall. That was a long trip, wasn't it? My gosh, we should have had more sense.

G: And then--

C: Then to Bermuda. And the thing I remember his saying, and I'm sure it was facetious, but the reason for Bermuda was to sort of put it all together and write a report for the President. And he kept saying to those of us who were trying to write the report, "I want twenty-five facts. I want twenty-five facts about this trip that I can report to the President." I don't know whether we found twenty-five facts or not. I think he felt good about the trip, but I think he also felt that the substance was sparse, that there wasn't anything, that he didn't bring any new initiatives nor any new ideas to them. And maybe he brought twenty-five facts back to the President about the conditions and problems that we faced. But he was always pressing, "What did we learn? What are we bringing that's new and different? What am I accomplishing?" And when he didn't feel that he was accomplishing anything except sort of a protocol visit, he was really unhappy.

G: His report did seem to point out inadequacies in our embassies there, that they weren't being run as efficiently as perhaps [they could be]. Do you recall his emphasis on this?

C: The way I recall it, I think he felt that our choice of ambassadors had been--that they were you might say too protocol-minded, not people oriented, that they viewed their jobs too narrowly, that they weren't very good representatives of the United States, of the people of the

Crockett -- II -- 30

United States, that they were maybe too socially oriented and not substance.

G: Did he urge the administration to come up with more aid for these countries?

C: Not to my knowledge. Now that may have been the fact, but not to my knowledge. I don't believe that came out.

G: Did you participate in any of the debriefing?

C: Of the President?

G: Yes.

C: No, I was not there. And I don't know who was there. I don't know how that went, whether Johnson took the notes that we did and took them to the President or not. I don't know how that happened. When we got back to the State Department, I went back to my old job, and, you know, I wasn't involved.

G: One question on the Vietnam portion I want to ask you. There's a note in the files that indicates that he collected some of the banners that were put out along the route. Do you recall that?

C: No. I don't recall it.

G: How about his rebel yell in the Taj Mahal? Any insight as to how that happened or why it happened?

C: No, I don't.

G: Was it perceived as a--?

C: Well, I wasn't there, you see.

G: Yes, I know. But was it perceived as an embarrassment at the time on the trip?

Crockett -- II -- 31

C: I don't think so. I don't think so. It didn't register with me that way.

(Interruption)

G: Let's talk a little bit about the Dag Hammarskjold funeral in September 1961. He asked you to go, LBJ called you and asked you to go.

C: He called and asked me to go, saying that Walter Jenkins wasn't going and Lady Bird wasn't going and he didn't have anybody with him that cared about him and he would like to have me go. It was inconvenient for me to go because Mrs. Crockett was in the hospital, but I did go. That was an unhappy kind of trip, because--I don't know the political ramifications of his relationship with [Adlai] Stevenson, but Stevenson was on the trip and Stevenson conceived himself as being, quote, "the official representative" and Johnson conceived himself as being the official representative. A petty little thing, but humans are petty occasionally, and the petty little thing is that Stevenson came aboard first and went to bed, and there was only really one bed on that plane, and Johnson then sat up all night. I remember these kind of unhappy things that went on on the trip.

G: Was he upset with Stevenson?

C: Oh, very, very upset with Stevenson and very upset with not just the action but the whole attitude that Stevenson had. Stevenson at that time was our UN ambassador, and as UN ambassador I think he felt a special relationship to the Hammarskjolds and sort of paraded that. And Johnson again reacted badly to that kind of behavior. But I don't

Crockett -- II -- 32

remember much else. I don't know where we went from Stockholm. Maybe we came directly home.

G: Was the protocol at the funeral such that would favor Stevenson?

C: No, I think we got it arranged so that the protocol favored Johnson as the designated representative of the President. But it was a real bone of contention at the time. Johnson was strange when challenged like that. Often he was very gracious, you know, and didn't care, but when challenged like that, he could be very petty in insisting on the prerogatives of his office.

G: But in this case he complained about it, but he did allow Stevenson to have that--he didn't attempt to--

C: No, he didn't attempt to--

G: --pull rank?

C: No, but he complained. And I don't believe Stevenson came home on the plane with us; I think Stevenson came another way home.

G: Was that Johnson's doing?

C: Yes, I think that was Johnson's doing, or our doing for Johnson.

(Interruption)

First stop I think was Beirut, is that right? I don't remember anything particular about that stop of note, from my point of view. In those days Beirut was peaceful and pleasant and beautiful, before all the trouble started. So it was a pleasant stop. Lebanon was a country where the very first AID programs were started, and so there was lots of AID activity and lots of evidence of AID success in Lebanon.



Crockett -- II -- 33

But I don't remember the itinerary or I don't remember really the purpose of that stop.

G: His diary reports enthusiastic crowds along the route.

C: Yes.

G: He went to American University and spoke to groups of students. Do you recall that?

C: I don't recall that.

G: From there you went to Iran. Let me ask you about that leg of it.

C: He and the Shah were friendly. I think he saw the Shah, again, as a strong person who was trying hard to modernize his country politically and socially. I think Johnson was always aware and a little bit concerned about whether things were happening fast enough, whether time would run out before they got enough done to satisfy people, that time may be on the side of the dissidents rather than on the side of the government. Which has proved the case in Iran, proved the case in Saigon. So I think his awareness was right on [target].

G: He did refer to this problem?

C: Yes, right, and in his admiration of strong men as getting things done, I think he still felt that most of them were not moving fast enough or that almost all of them had an Achilles' heel in relatives or friends that were corrupt, that were behind their backs causing problems that nullified many of their efforts. And the case of the Shah is a good example of that, but also most of these strong men have gone down the drain because of this very thing that Johnson was

Crockett -- II -- 34

concerned about, their lack of moving directly enough and forcefully enough on social reform and political reform.

G: How did he react to the opulence of the royal family, wealth and--?

C: Well, I think he saw or at least was propagandized by how much the Shah was doing in giving away land and in bringing about reform, so that I think he excused it in those terms. I think he was more concerned about the behavior or what the relatives or the friends and the officials were doing that was contrary to the Shah's program. And there was a lot of evidence of that in the country, of people getting rich, getting wealthy themselves through corrupt practices.

G: Did he meet with any of the opposition?

C: I don't believe so, I don't believe so. I think it would be seen as too difficult, too dangerous.

G: I have a note that he was sunburned by the time he was in Iran. How did he get sunburned?

C: I don't remember. I don't remember that that was the case.

G: There was a wreath laying also in Iran.

C: Yes, generally there was. That was generally part of the official protocol. And he always objected to that. Without exception, he always complained that I made him lay wreaths, and the remark he always made was, "Wreath laying, reviewing troops will never save a country. That's not going to save this country. It takes more than that, more substance."

G: He went from Iran to Turkey, and there he did cancel or postpone a wreath laying. Do you remember that and any significance?

Crockett -- II -- 35

C: Yes. In Turkey he was in a bad mood for some reason, but I remember when we arrived in Ankara--Ankara was a terrible town, the hotels are bad and so his accommodations weren't that good--but I remember a very enthusiastic crowd, and they were under his window a large part of the night chanting, "Johnson, Johnson." Then he would come out, and I remember we remonstrated, saying, "Well, you ought to get to bed," and his saying, "Well, whenever the people want to see me, I'm going to be there to see them." So he reacted, he was very sensitive to the moods of people and their feeling toward him.

G: What did he do? Did he just go out on the balcony or did he go downstairs?

C: He'd go out on the balcony. He didn't go out among them. But they were there for hours. Same thing happened in Korea later on in another trip, large crowds of people that just wouldn't go away, you know. Now, the people along the route, they were enthusiastic but that didn't mean as much as a group coming and staying around.

G: He went to--was it Ataturk? Is that the way you pronounce it?

C: Yes, Ataturk, right.

G: And visited a literacy center there. Do you remember that?

C: I don't remember that.

G: I have a note that he was deeply fatigued at that point.

C: Yes, the schedule was hard and he had been out with--the schedule I think called for a long, long day of seeing projects and visiting villages. And those are tiring. It was hot and dirty and dusty, and I don't think he was sleeping well because the air conditioning wasn't

Crockett -- II -- 36

very good. So I think he was fatigued. One of the things that we learned and he learned later, I think on this trip, was one way to relax him and get him to rest would be to get somebody, get a local person to rub him down, give him a good massage. And often we found somebody to do that.

G: It was his birthday at this point, too, on the trip, and I have a note that you presented a gift and they did have an informal party in his suite. Can you recall that?

C: Isn't that strange? I'd forgotten all about that. I don't remember. It's a shame I don't remember the birthday or presenting the gift or thinking about how we would arrange it, but I don't. I just don't remember that.

G: He continued on and ended up in Istanbul.

C: Yes. Was that the last stop?

G: I believe it was--

C: I think so.

G: --in Turkey.

C: Yes, then we went to--Istanbul was not a significant place. There was nothing going on there really except I think that was more of a rest.

G: What was his mood like in Istanbul?

C: Terrible. Terrible. My tape is about Istanbul. He was unhappy with arrangements and unhappy with too many motorcycles. He was really unhappy, and I think disappointed that there wasn't much substance, that we really didn't do anything, he didn't accomplish anything in a meaningful way, and therefore was seeing the trip as a useless trip.

Crockett -- II -- 37

And again, the press can be very harsh, and I think the press was questioning what was the trip accomplishing and why were we going, and he was very sensitive to critical press statements.

G: Really? And he would read these press reports on the--?

C: Yes, sir, yes, sir. Boy, he had those--you had to have a clipping service and a translation service and see what the local press was saying. But, also, we had the reports on what the American press was saying, so he was very, very sensitive.

G: Did he object to the reporters face to face, or did he just complain?

C: No, he did not object to the reporters, but he complained to people like Carl Rowan and Bill Moyers or Busby, whomever was along supposedly keeping the press in line, that he was getting a bad press and that there wasn't enough substance. Istanbul was not a happy stop.

G: Can you go into more detail?

C: Well, I don't know much--Istanbul was where he really complained about his accommodations and complained about too many motorcycle escorts and too many formal arrangements of book signings, that these were all evidence of just protocol without accomplishing anything. So I think his unhappiness really stemmed from a feeling of futility and frustration that nothing is being done.

Tape 2 of 2, Side 1

C: --end suite and all the doors of the other rooms opened onto that hallway that faced the suite, and people were in and out and he couldn't sleep and the doors were closing. I hadn't remembered this until you said it, and he said, "Everybody's confined to their

Crockett -- II -- 38

quarters. Nobody's to leave and go out." I don't think people took that that seriously, but he did say it and he did it.

And to avoid this in Istanbul, we made the famous Hilton Wall or the Istanbul Wall. His suite again was at the end of a corridor, so we built, in this lovely hotel, a wooden wall that walled his entrance off from the rest of the [hallway]. And we hung it then, draped it with a Persian rug so it didn't look like an old boarded wall, it looked more like a--

G: The purpose was to keep staff members from disturbing him?

C: And to give him privacy. He really wanted privacy. He wanted to see the people he wanted to see, but he didn't want to see a lot of gawking Americans and others that were--you know, he'd come up the elevator and to go from the elevator into his room, you'd have to go down the hallway and there would be people out there, and he wanted his privacy. He wanted those crowds, but yet when he wanted to be private, he wanted to be private. So the way we accommodated that in this particular hotel was to build this wall and, of course, that created quite a stir among the press and among people. But easily explained. You know, if you can explain it, why, don't explain it around his idiosyncracies, you explain it around other needs, so it passed.

But he was for some reason very irascible and unhappy and I don't know all the reasons, but I know some of the reactions were like the wall and like the motorcycles and like the books.

G: What did he do about the motorcycles?

Crockett -- II -- 39

- C: Oh, we got them taken off. I went to the Turkish authorities and got the motorcycles taken off. They put them on, you know, I think sincerely for security reasons, but thinking about it last night, I was thinking he didn't seem to have any fear. He didn't evidence any fear that there was anything going to happen to him, walking among those crowds and riding in an automobile that was unattended by police.
- G: But he didn't like the motorcycles?
- C: The sirens. Again, he didn't like them because what he thought the image that portrayed with people, that it separated him from the people, that it put an aura around him that gave the wrong impression of him to the people on the streets. He didn't want it to be a parade. He wanted to be touchable and approachable. So the motorcycles, they went too fast and they went screechingly along. Instead of a chance to see people and really relate, they whisked him along at fifty miles an hour, and he was just unhappy about that.
- G: With regard to press criticism, were the reporters themselves more favorable than perhaps some of their editors who were writing the columns back in the States?
- C: I think so, probably. I think he felt that he was always being unfairly criticized by perhaps the officialdom of newspapers more than by reporters. He did have in those days sort of a persecution complex that he was put upon or unfairly treated by the press particularly but by others, too, and maybe particularly also by the Kennedy officialdom.

Crockett -- II -- 40

As I said earlier, I think there was a warm feeling between the President and Mr. Johnson, but certainly Mr. Johnson deeply suspected Bobby Kennedy of plotting against him, of trying to find things. I know one time when we were in one country and getting ready to come home, Mr. Johnson had bought quite a bit of things and he was concerned that Bobby Kennedy would embarrass him when we got home, of trying to have customs make a special spectacle of his arrival with too much stuff and so on. So he was a little bit paranoid about Robert Kennedy and what Robert Kennedy--

(Interruption)

He did have a paranoid quality I think occasionally.

G: Did you ever see any reason to justify this?

C: No, I never did see any reason to justify it, but no doubt he did, and the interesting thing then was after he became president, he kept all those people on. Many of us questioned his judgment in doing that. Perhaps--I'm sure his judgment was right, but it was strange that he forgave--or if he didn't forgive, at least he accommodated all those people.

G: In the case of the customs situation, what did he do about this?

C: Well, he left it to me again, and one of the things we did was we took a customs official with us who pre-cleared everything. Mr. Johnson was wanting--you know, he had strange ideas occasionally, like he had bought a lot of stuff I think in Belgium. He had bought guns for friends and knives and a lot of Belgium--well, he wanted all of us to give him our entry privileges, our hundred dollars or two hundred



Crockett -- II -- 41

dollars. You couldn't give it to him, but he would use ours to bring his stuff in. Well, you know, I wouldn't think personally about it, but I could see that as really being explosive. Somebody would squeal it to the press and then you'd see it all over the headlines. My approach was we'd just do it directly. We'd tell the customs official that the Vice President has bought a lot of gifts and we'd bring them in straightforward, and if we need to pay duty, we'll pay duty on them. So that's what we did, and we didn't have to pay any duty. But Johnson was convinced that Kennedy would have set it up so that--

(Interruption)

But that was the paranoia that he had occasionally.

G: Yes. Any other examples of how this asserted itself?

C: Well, a little bit maybe not exactly on [that], but he also was paranoid about which side of his face you took a picture of, you know, and that his best side was his left side or maybe his right side, I don't know which. But I remember one time being with Carl Rowan on this trip--I think it was in Istanbul--where Johnson brought a whole bunch of photographs down that the press had taken and he threw them on the table and told Carl Rowan, "Look at all of these. You wouldn't want to give these to your grandmother. They're terrible. They're all on the wrong side," blah, blah. Very almost paranoid about how he was portrayed pictorially but also in writing, very sensitive to that portrayal.

G: My impression is that the photographs of him by foreign photographers were not nearly as complimentary as those by our own photographers.

Crockett -- II -- 42

- C: And often our own photographers were coached by people like Rowan and maybe helped position and weren't as candid. And the foreign photographers weren't as good, you know, didn't have as good equipment perhaps.
- G: I have a note that he departed Istanbul, the Hilton Hotel, for the airport after spending the day resting and in conference with you and Busby and all. Do you remember that, what that was about?
- C: No, I don't remember what that was about.
- G: How did he get over his depression in Istanbul?
- C: That was depression, I think that would be a good statement. Well, I think it may have come also from exhaustion, and I think the rest and being there without pressure and without the need to be on stage helped him.
- G: Was he in a better mood when he arrived at Cyprus?
- C: Yes, when we left and he got there, why, things had straightened out and he was in a better mood.
- G: Anything on the Cyprus--?
- C: Not much. I don't remember anything specific. I think he spoke to the assembly there or whatever they call it; I think he gave a speech, but there was not much.
- G: He went from there to Greece.
- C: And I don't remember anything happening in Greece. I wasn't involved in any of his officialdom there.
- G: Ambassador [Henry] Labouisse seems to have been somewhat controversial at the time. What was LBJ's attitude toward him, do you recall?

Crockett -- II -- 43

- C: I think friendly in that case. I think he was seen not as a typical foreign service ambassador and as far as I can remember, it was a friendly relationship.
- G: Also in Athens I have a note that he went to the hotel and worked nearly all night with you.
- C: I noted some of those, and I simply could not bring back any of the substance of all that was going on in those cases, what we did or what we talked about, or why the meeting. Sorry. I wish I could, I wish I had made some notes.
- G: You think some of it may simply have been insomnia or--?
- C: Maybe. Perhaps. I don't know.
- G: Anything else on our relations with Greece and Turkey on this leg of the trip?
- C: Not specifically that I recall.
- G: Lynda, his daughter, was along.
- C: That's right, she was along, and she was very gracious and very helpful. She was a very good addition to the trip, I remember now. Mrs. Johnson was also helpful, too. It was always nice to have her with us.
- G: How would she help? In what way?
- C: Well, she could help calm him down and when he would not do something, well, she would be willing to do it for him, like a meeting of the press or something. She was always gracious and helpful to him. She is I think a real fine woman.
- G: Yes. Can you recall a particular episode where she--?

Crockett -- II -- 44

C: I remember, you know, once when he came in hot and tired and dirty from walking in the streets with people, why, I think in this particular case he took off his shoes and she rubbed his feet and maybe applied some kind of a lotion or linament, which I always told my wife, well, that's the kind of a wife to have, one that rubs your feet. But she was just by her attitude very gracious and very supportive. Sorry I can't remember more.

G: Did she ever encourage him to do things that he might not be inclined to do?

C: Yes. When we would have trouble, you know, he would be restive about doing something, she was more practical, "Well, you have to do some things that perhaps aren't very significant, but you have to do them for appearance or for social reasons." And she would help us get across--she would encourage him and he would often listen to her and agree grudgingly with her where he wouldn't with us at all. So we used her oftentimes as sort of our mouthpiece and our helper. She was more practical around the practicalities and the social requirements than he was.

G: Okay. From there you went to Rome.

C: Oh, yes, yes. Again I don't remember much about Rome either. Strange how that faded. I don't remember anything happening in Rome of importance, at least from my point of view.

And then home. That was a long trip.

G: Now, he did meet with the Ambassador [G. Frederick Reinhardt]. Did he meet with the Pope that trip, or was that--?

Crockett -- II -- 45

C: Yes, I'm sure he did. I think we had a gift for the Pope, and he went out to the Pope's summer palace and met with the Pope.

G: Anything on his conversation with the Pope?

C: No, I wasn't there and I'm not aware.

G: Okay. Then he went to Ireland.

C: Did we go to Ireland?

G: Yes. Perhaps just a refueling stop there.

C: Yes, I think so. I don't think we stopped.

G: Okay. Anything else on that trip, the Middle Eastern trip, that we haven't discussed?

C: No, my tape is on the Middle Eastern trip, so--

G: Oh, it is?

C: --maybe they'll pick up some funny things on there.

G: Why don't you tell me about the tape?

C: When I got back from that long trip, you know, a lot of people had stayed home and made things happen, and so whenever I would get home, I'd have them to dinner, and this particular time I had them to dinner and I talked about the funny things that happened on the trip, the "funny things," quote, unquote, that he sparked, like the wall in the Hilton Hotel. So I told them about those kind of things in a facetious way, a humorous way, and my son, unbeknown to me, taped it. So this tape is a tape of my talk, and if it can be deciphered, it might throw some sort of personal light on Lyndon Johnson.

G: Okay.

Crockett -- II -- 46

C: We're getting about to the end, aren't we?

End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview II

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION  
LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON LIBRARY

Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of William J. Crockett

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, William J. Crockett of Sun City, Arizona, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title and interest in the tape recording and transcript of the personal interview conducted on August 19, 1986 at Los Altos, California and prepared for deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

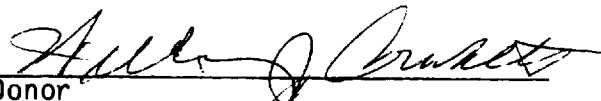
(1) The transcript shall be available for use by researchers as soon as it has been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

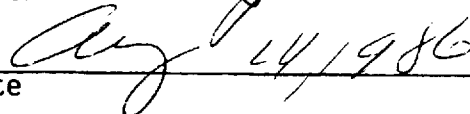
(2) The tape recording shall be available to those researchers who have access to the transcript.

(3) I hereby assign to the United States Government all copyright I may have in the interview transcript and tape.

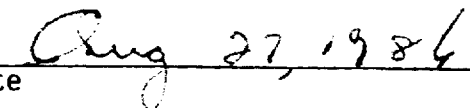
(4) Copies of the transcript and the tape recording may be provided by the Library to researchers upon request.

(5) Copies of the transcript and tape recording may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

  
Donor

  
Date

  
Archivist of the United States

  
Date